

# SICHA SUMMARY

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



## Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 16

### *Shemos - Chof Daled Teves*

#### The Context:

The Tzemach Tzedek records that his grandfather, the Alter Rebbe, passed away on Motzei Shabbos Shemos before midnight, while he was exiled from his home as he fled the French forces. Clearly, by tying the Alter Rebbe's passing to Shemos and to his being in exile, the Tzemach Tzedek means to underscore a thematic connection between the two.

#### The Explanation:

Shemos is the only parshah whose entire theme is exile. In the following section, Vaera, G-d already begins the process of redemption by striking Egypt with plagues. In the previous section, Vayechi, the slavery did not begin while Yaakov's children were still alive.

The shared theme of exile in the parshah and in the Alter Rebbe's passing away from his home is clear.

#### The Question:

But we must still probe further: The word Shemos, which expresses the essential theme of the parshah, alludes not to exile,

but to redemption. "These are the names (shemos) of the children of Israel who came to Egypt." By invoking Yakov's sons, the Torah refers to a time of freedom, for the Jewish people were not enslaved until their passing.

#### The Explanation:

The objective of exile is to obfuscate the revealed dimension of Divinity, and coerce the essence of the soul to the surface. When there is no revelation, the soul cannot rely on its intellect and emotional attachments, it must turn to its essential dedication that transcends all rationality and reasonableness. Thus it is precisely the darkness of exile that elicits the deepest light of the soul.

This is mirrored in the nature of a name. On the one hand, a name is external to the person who carries it. It does not reveal the essential character of the person, it is arbitrary. On the other hand, when a person is called by their name, they can be roused from a faint, they can be jostled from their reverie to focus their entire selves toward the person who called them.

This is like the phenomena of exile, which lacks any revelation, yet simultaneously elicits the deepest part of the person.

### In the Name:

This also aligns with the Alter Rebbe's lifework — to reveal the essence of Torah, its inner dimension, even within its most external layers, the laws of the revealed Torah. The essence is specifically found in the most prosaic, mundane discussions. This is also alluded to in his name, Shneur Zalman, which can be read as "two lights, within the strictures of time." The Alter Rebbe revealed the twin lights of the inner and revealed Torah within the basic material structure of the world, within human intellect.

Yet the ultimate purpose of exile is for this essential dedication to become revealed and assimilated within the hearts and minds of the people, and not remain a profound, unarticulated dedication. Thus, the Alter Rebbe's passing occurred in the transition between Shemos and Vaera, for the "seeing" and revelation of G-d's essence begins to unfold in the parshah of Vaera. The essential dedication trudged up through exile, Shemos, begins to shine in the lowest of possible worlds, Vaera (and I (G-d) appeared.)

\*\*\*